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Conrad's Uncovering "Homo Duplex" Camouflage

One of the most often quoted and discussed of Conrad's statements is a well-known phrase from his letter to Kazimierz Waliszewski: "In my case 'homo duplex' has more than one meaning."¹ This declaration is used by many critics as a key to both the life and work of Joseph Conrad, but this is also a great problem. How should we treat this ambiguous phrase: shall we try to univocalise it somehow, or maybe just emphasise its polyphony? Agnieszka Adamowicz-Pośpiech mentions that different conceptions of Conrad's biography are usually conditioned by different methods of scientific examination.² It is very significant, however, that what dominates is rather the second perspective of interpreting Conrad's life and work, that is emphasizing its heterogeneity. Usually critics propose here two strategies: one, showing a long chain of different Conrad "lives" which could be possibly connected with successive stages of the author's output; or another, emphasising a strong duplicity of life and literature in Conrad's case, and showing it as a kind of *coincidentia oppositorum* hidden in self-fashioning.

Robert Hampson's opinion on the first strategy is worth quoting:

Frederick Karl subtitled his biography "The Three Lives"; Bernard Meyer went even further and begins his biography with a reference to Conrad's "five separate and distinct lives": a "Polish gentleman-student; a sea-faring adventurer on French ships out of Marseilles; a British sailor who, by dint of his labors, attained the rank of captain in the Merchant Navy; a Congo River boatman

¹ *Conrad's Polish Background: Letters to and from Polish Friends*, ed. Zdzisław Najder, trans. Halina Carroll (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 240.

² See Agnieszka Adamowicz-Pośpiech, *Joseph Conrad – spory o biografie* (Katowice: Deni-Press, 2003), chapter 6: "Koncepcje osobowości Conrada."

caught in the sordid history of Belgian cupidity; and a lyrical master of English prose, the novelist Joseph Conrad.”³

However – notes Hampson – even if one were to demonstrate that Conrad had more lives than a cat, this would be approaching the issue from the wrong angle. Hampson proposes then the second strategy, which is inspired by Kristeva’s concept of the Other: a foreigner is an inevitable part of our identity, which is why the Other never will be fully the Same.⁴ Here we are dealing with a kind of dialectic very popular among those interpreters of Conrad’s output who discuss the problem of identity. I think that the best illustration of this perspective is Edward Said’s statement that for Conrad the very problem of personality “was still a question of either/or: either one surrendered to the flux of ‘ever becoming – never being’, or one’s consciousness matured enough to realize that order and the future were the results of self-assertion.”⁵ The general sense of the “homo duplex” dialectic has become a very safe cornerstone for critics for presenting the “either/or” dilemma in different forms. For example, Said stresses here the opposition between order and disorder;⁶ Daleski, writing on the idea of self-possession and dispossession in Conrad’s work, also gives here a dialectic recipe: “one must lose the self to find it”⁷; of course classical oppositions like Pole – Englishman, writer – sailor, life – literature must be also mentioned. The conclusions are usually quite similar: the polyphony of identity makes a polyphony of narration, and Conrad is “hiding himself within rhetoric.”⁸

It is impossible and unwise to contest these opinions completely. I would like to remark, however, that these opinions reduce the doubled duplicity declared by Conrad to one dialectic level. Besides, the “homo duplex” notion is very often given a general and, so to speak, hazy sense. That is why, to save this doubled meaning of duplicity, one must

³ Robert Hampson, *Cross-Cultural Encounters in Joseph Conrad’s Malay Fiction* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2000), p. 188.

⁴ See: Hampson, *Cross-Cultural Encounters*, pp. 188–189.

⁵ Edward W. Said, *Joseph Conrad and the Fiction of Autobiography* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 41.

⁶ Said, *Joseph Conrad and the Fiction of Autobiography*, p. 82. Using Heidegger’s terminology, Said also shows here “a transition from concrete involvement (*existenziell*) to the universal human structure (*existenzial*)” (pp. 195–196); in other words, we are dealing here with a transition from pure ontic being to the universal ontological context of it.

⁷ H.M. Daleski, *Joseph Conrad: The Way of Dispossession* (London: Faber and Faber, 1977), p. 18.

⁸ Said, *Conrad and the Fiction of Autobiography*, p. 4.

try to find out, firstly, what exactly Conrad means using the notion of "homo duplex"; secondly, what is the meaning he adds to the notion and finally why he does it.

In my opinion, for Conrad this very idea of "homo duplex" does not mean human duplicity in general, but has a very precise meaning. I suggest that in writing his declaration he could be referring to Alphonse Daudet's *Notes sur la Vie*, where this dilemma is specified:

Homo duplex, homo duplex! The first time that I perceived that I was two – recollects Daudet – was at the death of my brother Henri, when my father cried out so dramatically, "He is dead, he is dead!" While my first self wept, my second self thought, "How truly given was that cry, how fine it would be at the theatre." I was then fourteen years old.

This horrible duality has often given me matter for reflection. Oh, this terrible second me, always seated whilst the other is on foot, acting, living, suffering, bestirring itself. This second me that I have never been able to intoxicate, to make shed tears, or put to sleep. And how it sees into things, and how it mocks!⁹

I would like to underline the division of man into the spectator and the acting subject in this fragment as an essence of this "homo duplex" idea. And truly, at the turn of the twentieth century this double, who "sees into things," gives serious "matter for reflection," becoming one of the most popular philosophical themes. William James, who quotes Daudet, emphasises the need for balance within this duality: "This amount of inconsistency will only count as amiable weakness; but a stronger degree of heterogeneity may make a havoc of the subject's life."¹⁰ But even havoc could be useful, and this existential duality is a starting-point for a broad philosophical discourse built around man. It is sufficient to mention the meaningful title of Miguel de Unamuno's work: *The Tragic Sense of Life*, or Gabriel Marcel's dilemma: to be or to have. This strange combination of limitation and transgression we find also to be the basis of Emile Durkheim's sociology: "On the one hand is our individuality – and, more particularly, our body in which it is based; on the other is everything in us that expresses something other

⁹ Quoted in: William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature*, chapter 8: "The Divided Self, and the Process of Its Unification," accessed August 28, 2007, <http://human-nature.com/reason/james/chap6.html>. Conrad knew Daudet's writings very well. He even wrote an essay on Daudet.

¹⁰ James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*.

than ourselves.”¹¹ For Durkheim the dichotomy of senses and mind, instincts and morality, egoism and altruism, the sacred and the profane gives life to the idea of society:

Man is double. There are two beings in him: an individual being which has its foundation in the organism and the circle of whose activities is therefore strictly limited, and a social being which represents the highest reality in the intellectual and moral order that we can know by observation – I mean society. This duality of our nature has as its consequence in the practical order, the irreducibility of a moral ideal to a utilitarian motive, and in the order of thought, the irreducibility of reason to individual experience. In so far as he belongs to society, the individual transcends himself, both when he thinks and when he acts.¹²

It is worth remarking that the “philosophy of ‘homo duplex’” appears in the transgression between those extremes: in this model of knowledge reason is in some way endlessly being moved by man’s existence.

Of course one would say that this existential duality is just a classic motif or even an archetype of man’s thought, and has appeared in philosophical works down the centuries, not only at the turn of the twentieth century. Although it is true, one must admit that only just from the beginnings of the nineteenth century did the problem of existential duality become the central motif of man’s thought, and somehow start to determine the scope of human knowledge. Paradoxically, this existential “irreducibility” of man becomes both the justification and the scope of man’s discursive practice. From now on man can be double: both the subject and the object of his own cognition, just as Daudet has argued. At the turn of the twentieth century man became the main condition for human knowledge.¹³ What is more, we can observe that “homo

¹¹ Emile Durkheim, excerpt from “The Dualism of Human Nature and Its Social Conditions,” in: Robert N. Bellah, *Emile Durkheim: On Morality and Society, Selected Writings* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), p. 152, accessed August 28, 2007, <http://durkheim.itgo.com/assorteddurkheim1.html>.

¹² Emile Durkheim, excerpt from *The Elementary Form of the Religious Life*, in: *Emile Durkheim: Selections From His Work*, ed. George Simpson (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1963), p. 93, accessed August 28, 2007, <http://durkheim.itgo.com/assorteddurkheim1.html>. See also: Jerzy Szacki, *Durkheim* (Warszawa: Wiedza Powszechna, 1964).

¹³ I take “knowledge” in the meaning given to this term by Michel Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. by A.M. Sheridan Smith (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 201: it is the “group of elements, formed in a regular manner

duplex" figure of man became the cornerstone of the scientificity of the humanities. That is why Michel Foucault has described this modern episteme,¹⁴ on which all the humanities are established, as being in a state of "the anthropological sleep."

In *The Order of Things* Michel Foucault claims that "before the end of the eighteenth century, *man* did not exist."¹⁵ Through the "epistemological birth" "man appears in his ambiguous position as an object of knowledge and as a subject that knows: enslaved sovereign, observed spectator."¹⁶ Thereby man's existence is the precondition of human knowledge, and man's cognitive activity turns into the "anthropological sleep": "All empirical knowledge, provided it concerns man, can serve as a possible philosophical field in which the foundation of knowledge, the definition of its limits, and, in the end, the truth of all truth must be discoverable. [...] the pre-critical analysis of what man is in his essence becomes the analytic of everything that can, in general be presented to man's experience."¹⁷ Man's knowledge emerges in the hiatus "which resides in the 'and' of retreat *and* return, of thought *and* unthought, of the empirical *and* the transcendental, of what belongs to the order of positivity *and* what belongs to the order of foundations."¹⁸ This statement confirms Anna Grzegorzczuk's remark that in modern philosophy this motive of "existential rupture" dominates: we deal with various "cracks," "rifts," "tears," "in-betweens," "differences," "gaps,"

by a discursive practice; and which are indispensable to the constitution of science, although they are not necessarily destined to give rise to one [...]. Knowledge is that of which one can speak in discursive practice, and which is specified by that fact: the domain constituted by the different objects that will or will not acquire a scientific status." It is also "the space in which the subject may take up a position and speak of the objects with which he deals in his discourse"; "the field of coordination and subordination of statements in which concepts appear, and are defined, applied and transformed"; "possibilities of use and appropriation offered by discourse."

¹⁴ Michel Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 211, defines "episteme" as "the total set of relations that unite, at a given period, the discursive practices that give rise to epistemological figures, sciences, and possibly formalized systems; the way in which, in each of these discursive formations, the transitions to epistemologization, scientificity, and formalization are situated and operate," in other words it is "the totality of relations that can be discovered, for a given period, between the sciences." So if "knowledge" means the epistemological model of some historical period and its context in general, "episteme" is the particular configuration of sciences built within this complex of cognitive preconditions.

¹⁵ Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things. An Archaeology of Human Sciences* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 336.

¹⁶ Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 340.

¹⁷ Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 372.

¹⁸ Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 370.

“lacunas,” etc.¹⁹ Within this space, man’s existence and man’s cognition are turned into a kind of tautology, and the “homo duplex” figure becomes just a camouflage for the logorrhoea of discourse.

When Joseph Conrad admits that he is “homo duplex,” but provides that not only in one meaning, he takes a very specific position within this episteme. This other meaning emphasises, I think, cultural difference, but this is the difference that exposes the contextual limitation of man’s rhetoric and knowledge. This limitation sometimes results in an unawareness and incomprehension. Conrad’s characters never fully understand and are never understood; furthermore their duplicity can never be used as a kind of explanation or excuse.

We can observe quite clearly in *Lord Jim* that Jim’s experience and the conflicting intentions and acts are for him just a pretext for never-ending interpretations of his own existential situation. In my opinion Jim’s problem is not related to his “confounded imagination,”²⁰ but rather to his strange talkativeness. In the novel we find two brief remarks which put the light on Jim’s case from different angles: while Stein says that man “want to be so, and again he want to be so,”²¹ the French lieutenant sums it up in quite a different manner: “One talks, one talks; this is all very fine; but at the end of the reckoning one is no cleverer than the next man.”²² In other words, this existential problem of man shows up when a person, ignoring context, finds himself as the only heart of it. Somehow being amalgamates with talking in Jim’s case, which is why we have to deal here not only with the problem of one’s morality, but also with a kind of epistemological strategy built on man’s tragedy.

The narrator describes Jim as a person who had a skill of “enlarging his knowledge”²³ independently of any experience, because “his dreams and the success of his imaginary achievements [...] were the best parts of [his] life, its secret truth, its hidden reality.”²⁴ But there is something more than that: “he managed wonderfully to convey the brooding rancour of his mind into the bare recital of events,”²⁵ notes Marlow. That means that the efficiency of Jim’s rhetoric is a way of transforming

¹⁹ See: Anna Grzegorzcyk, *Filozofia Nieoczekiwanego. Między fenomenologią a hermeneutyką* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Fundacji Humaniora, 2002), pp. 17–24.

²⁰ Joseph Conrad, *Lord Jim. An Authoritative Text, Backgrounds, Sources, Essays in Criticism*, ed. by Norman Sherry and Thomas Moser (New York: W.W. Norton and Company Inc., 1968), p. 54.

²¹ Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 129.

²² Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 89.

²³ Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 7.

²⁴ Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 13.

²⁵ Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 64.

reality by detailed and subtle interpretations of his existence in a very broad, universal sense as a kind of "human" fate. Of course, during the inquiry after the *Patna's* accident, the object of it is for him not just a "superficial how" but above all a "fundamental why,"²⁶ but this "why" becomes finally just a strategy of translating mute experience into an existential sense. Jim needs bare facts then, but just to free his narration:

He wanted to go on talking for truth's sake, perhaps for his own sake also; and while his utterance was deliberate, his mind positively flew round and round the serried circle of facts that had surged up all about him to cut him off from the rest of his kind: it was like a creature that, finding itself imprisoned within an enclosure of high stakes, dashes round and round, distracted in the night, trying to find a weak spot, a crevice, a place to scale, some opening through which it may squeeze itself and escape. This awful activity of mind made him hesitate at times in his speech...²⁷

It can be said that the more Jim wants to escape from the facts, the more he uses them. The same takes place during his talk with Marlow. Although Jim assures Marlow that he doesn't want to excuse himself, but rather would like to explain²⁸ – he builds a broad interpretation around one jump and the insight and fullness of it are the reason he just "provokes one by his contradictory indiscretions."²⁹

To show the complexity of the *Patna* incident as an existential dilemma, Jim needs a man who would confirm a "human" community of knowledge and experience: "I would like somebody to understand – somebody – one person at least! You! Why not you!"³⁰ he cries to Marlow. But this human presence is just a supplement for his story, a kind of pretext for his interpretations: "He was not speaking to me," says Marlow, "he was only speaking before me in a dispute with an invisible personality, an antagonistic and inseparable partner of existence – another possessor of his soul. [...] He wanted an ally, a helper, an accomplice."³¹ But he needs this human factor only to expose abstract speculations on values, truth and the lot of man: "I was made to look at the convention that lurks in all truth and on the

²⁶ Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 35.

²⁷ Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 19.

²⁸ See: Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 50.

²⁹ Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 52.

³⁰ Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 50.

³¹ Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 57.

essential sincerity of falsehood.” So Marlow sums up Jim’s rhetoric. “He appealed to all sides at once – to the side turned perpetually to the light of day, and to that side of us which, like the other hemisphere of the moon, exists stealthily in perpetual darkness, with only a fearful ashy light falling at times on the edge.”³² That is why Jim’s “high-minded absurdity of intention” makes the “futility” of every episode “profound and touching.”³³ And that is also the reason the *Patna* incident is just a “missed chance”³⁴ for him. He wants to be “human” then just in order to validate his ideal of being a man. But he deals with his own existence very selectively and conventionally: for example, as Bruce Johnson points out, Jim rationalizes his attempt to dodge his betrayal by “shifting responsibility onto [...] an allegedly will-less moment.”³⁵ In spite of that he’s just “one of us” for Marlow; but Marlow has also a “confounded democratic quality of vision,” which means that all he can see is “merely the human being,”³⁶ in a disconnection from all the philosophy of man presented by Jim. But he has got another great gift, too: a talent for detailed examination of different contexts and points of view surrounding Jim. That is why Conrad can expose here the use of the “homo duplex” figure as a rhetorical excuse: we see Jim not through the eyes of one “man” only, but through the eyes of many people, who differ from each other so much.

Joseph Conrad exposes the deceptiveness of Jim’s “homo duplex” mind also by placing it in another cultural context. Patusan is “a chance he had been dreaming of,”³⁷ just a blank setting for his self-fashioning: “His loneliness added to his stature.”³⁸ This is all possible, because Patusan is for Jim just a kind of empty space, without any culture, without any reason, “land without a past, where his word was the one truth of every passing day.”³⁹ For Jim the people and the land of Patusan are only the ground on which to realize himself. The apparent passivity of the people transforms his existence and adds firmness to his knowledge: “I’ve got to look only at the face of the first man that comes along to regain my confidence,” admits Jim and at the same time he makes this man mute and unreasonable: “They can’t be made to understand what is going on

³² Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 57.

³³ Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 119.

³⁴ Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 51.

³⁵ Bruce Johnson, *Conrad’s Models of Mind* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971), pp. 209–210.

³⁶ Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 58.

³⁷ Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 141.

³⁸ Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 166.

³⁹ Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 166.

in me."⁴⁰ This is a minimized, but indispensable context for Jim; and "that is why he seemed to love the land and the people with a sort of fierce egoism, with a contemptuous tenderness,"⁴¹ notes Marlow. It can be said that we are dealing here with a kind of dialectic, which turns "spirit" (in the meaning of mind, rhetoric or knowledge) into reality by ignoring any cultural context. But culture has its own reason: it is ironic that Jim's story, so carefully created by him at Patusan, moved into another context becomes a "Jim-myth"⁴² in which Jewel, Jim's fiancée, changes into a precious stone.

Jim's betrayal of the Patusan people originates in his realizing his own dream of a heroic life as well as his loyalty to the idea of conduct. This is the myth that provokes gentleman Brown to attack. Jim betrays the people because he gives himself up to the "bond of knowledge" between him and Brown, ignoring the context of the situation and the rights of the people of the Patusan: "[Brown] asked Jim whether he had nothing fishy in his life to remember that he was so damnedly hard upon a man trying to get out of a deadly hole by the first means that came to hand – and so on, and so on. And there ran through the rough talk a vein of subtle reference to their common blood, an assumption of common experience; a sickening suggestion of common guilt, of secret knowledge that was like a bond of their minds and of their hearts."⁴³ Just because he wants to be heroic, he does not treat Brown as a common criminal, but as the real gentleman that he always wanted to be. Paradoxically, trying to make his truth universal, he exposes his European knowledge; and following his duplicity he simultaneously betrays Patusan and misinterprets his own cultural ways of conduct.

By giving priority to cultural relativism over man's duplicity, Conrad approaches the cognitive perspective typical of modern anthropology. As John W. Griffith points out, a modern anthropologist must be a "homo duplex," because he is a "border-dweller."⁴⁴ Yet we must remember that this limit cannot be used as an excuse, as was the case with Jim. He explains: "There was no thickness of a sheet of paper between the right and wrong of this affair." Marlow replies to him grimly: "How much more did you want?"⁴⁵ For Conrad, cultural and contextual relativism

⁴⁰ Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 186.

⁴¹ Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 152.

⁴² Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 171.

⁴³ Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 235.

⁴⁴ See: John W. Griffith, *Joseph Conrad and the Anthropological Dilemma: "Bewildered Traveller"* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 14–15.

⁴⁵ Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 79.

is quite different from man's duplicity. And this is, I suppose, the heart of the problem of the double meaning of "homo duplex": when cultural anthropology examines a concrete, but contextual man, the "anthropological sleep" of philosophical reflection makes concrete man just a subject of universal knowledge. Conrad tries to depict the modern "anthropological sleep" and to rebuild the tradition of reflection on man as a dweller in the world of cultures. I think that he never used cultural relativism just as an excuse. Even in his "autobiographical" texts such as *Mirror of the Sea* and *Personal Record* we will not find simple self-fashioning. These texts rather emphasise different contexts which have created man – that is why the figure of man as the one and only origin of reason and order just disappears in it, according to Stanisław Modrzewski's remark on *Personal Record*.⁴⁶ That is why Conrad is not "hiding himself within rhetoric," but rather shows man within culture and between cultures.

This is the reason why Jim not only dies, but above all why he disappears: "And that's the end. He passes away under a cloud, inscrutable at heart, forgotten, unforgiven, and excessively romantic."⁴⁷ Only for that reason can we observe him from so many perspectives, in so many contexts, but not through the eyes of only one person. And just as man's humanity cannot be an excuse for Jim, Jim cannot be an excuse for us. He disappears like so many other Conradian characters disappeared in a literal or metaphorical sense: Winnie Verloc and Brierly, who have drowned, leaving on their ships' decks just little remembrances of their lives, like a wedding-ring or a watch; Razumow, who has lost his hearing; Kurtz, who has become reduced to only a voice; Renouard, who has just left his footprints on the seashore. This disappearance makes us search for the truth about man outside him: in the contexts that have created him and in the narrations that have been created about him.

I think that something quite similar has been suggested by Michel Foucault, when he states that one day "man would be erased, like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea."⁴⁸ That is why, trying to cross our "anthropological sleep" we shall try to face "man's disappearance, not to take him as a starting-point in our attempts to reach the truth," not to "refer all knowledge back to the truths of man himself," not to "refuse to think without immediately thinking that it is man who is

⁴⁶ See: Stanisław Modrzewski, *Conrad a konwencje: autorska świadomość systemów a warsztat literacki pisarza* (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, 1992), p. 156: "osoba autora w tych wspomnieniach ginie."

⁴⁷ Conrad, *Lord Jim*, p. 253.

⁴⁸ Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 422.

thinking,”⁴⁹ but to realize that “man is neither the oldest nor the most constant problem that has been posed for human knowledge.”⁵⁰ In my opinion Conrad shows not only the metaphysical or epistemological consequences of this disappearance, but also the cultural context of it.

⁴⁹ Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 373.

⁵⁰ Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 421.

Marek Pacukiewicz

Conradowskie odkrywanie kamuflażu *homo duplex*

Streszczenie

W początkach XX wieku w kręgu dyskursów humanistycznych pojawiło się nowe pojęcie – *homo duplex*. Lokując pozycję człowieka na skrzyżowaniu podwójnego kontekstu ducha i ciała, pojęcie to samo w sobie stało się pretekstem do niekończącego się dyskursu zamieniającego dramat ludzkiej egzystencji w antropologiczne uśpienie narracji w rozumieniu Michela Foucaulta. Sam Joseph Conrad twierdził, że w jego wypadku *homo duplex* ma więcej niż jedno znaczenie. Skonfrontowanie go z innym wymiarem ludzkiej egzystencji w postaci kontekstu kulturowego wyznacza strategię odkrywania kamuflażu, za którym kryje się właśnie „dyskurs *homo duplex*”. Ponieważ postaci Conrada niemal zawsze ułożone są w przestrzeni pomiędzy antropologicznymi i filozoficznymi aspektami egzystencji, często jedynym lekarstwem na owo rozdzielenie jest ignorancja. Artykuł analizuje także tytułowe pojęcie w kontekście dylematów biograficznych samego Conrada, którego życie niemal na każdej płaszczyźnie, począwszy od kwestii tożsamości narodowej, a skończywszy na przynależności zawodowej, wyznaczały podwójne i często sprzeczne wymiary egzystencjalne.

Marek Pacukiewicz

La découverte du camouflage d'*homo duplex* selon Conrad

Résumé

Dans les débuts du XX^e siècle au sein des discours humanistes une nouvelle notion est apparue : *homo duplex*. En positionnant l'homme à la croisée du double contexte d'esprit et de corps, la notion en soi est devenue le prétexte à un discours infini, changeant le drame de l'existence humaine en un endormissement anthropologique de la narration selon la conception de Michel Foucault. Joseph Conrad en personne disait que dans son cas *homo duplex* possède plus qu'une seule signification. Confronter cette notion avec une autre dimension de l'existence humaine sous la forme de contexte culturel, marque des stratégies de découvrir le camouflage, derrière lequel se cache

« le discours *homo duplex* ». Puisque les personnages de Conrad sont presque toujours placés dans un espace entre des aspects anthropologiques et philosophiques de l'existence, souvent le seul remède contre ce dédoublement s'avère être la solitude. L'article analyse cette notion dans le contexte des dilemmes biographiques de Conrad, dont la vie à tous les niveaux, à commencer par la question d'identité nationale, pour finir à l'appartenance professionnelle, était marquée par des dimensions existentielles doubles, et souvent contradictoires.